

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH



Palm Sunday
05 April 2020

St. Francis Xavier, Acushnet – Diocese of Fall River

Mass Schedule

(April 4th - April 12th)

Sat.	Apr 04 4:00pm	Palm Sunday (Vigil) (Rd) Edmond & Louise Tetreault and Al Hebert
Sun.	Apr 05 8:00am 10:30am	Palm Sunday (Rd) Joan Hammarquist; Rene Pepin <i>Pro Populo</i>
Mon.	Apr 06 9:00am	Monday of Holy Week (Vi) Paulino & Ana Vieira and Daughter
Tues.	Apr 07 9:00am	Tuesday of Holy Week (Vi) Carol Desrosiers Graf
Wed.	Apr 08 9:00am	Wednesday of Holy Week (Vi) Joan Hammarquist & Frank Lawrence Jr.
Thurs.	Apr 09 7:00pm	Holy Thursday (Wh) Jaime da Fonseca
Fri.	Apr 10 3:00pm	Good Friday (Rd) Passion Liturgy: No Intentions
Sat.	Apr 11 7:30pm	Easter Sunday (Vigil) (Wh) <i>Pro Populo</i>
Sun.	Apr 12 8:00am 10:30am	Easter Sunday (Wh) For the Parish Month's Mind

Financial Report

Mail In/Drop Off Income:

Sunday, 22 March	\$786.00
Sunday, 29 March	\$2,113.00

Prayers Please

... for all the sick of our parish: those homebound, in the hospital, and nursing facilities; and for all the souls in purgatory. Please especially pray for all those who have contracted COVID-19, that the Lord will come to them, bless them and heal them

Sanctuary Lamp

*During Eucharistic Adoration please pray for the following person/s for whose intention the Sanctuary Candle burns this week: **Raymond Lemieux & Joan Hammarquist***

CONFESSION

Monday: 5:30 to 6:30 pm
Saturday: 9:30 to 10:00am
Saturday: 3:00 to 3:45pm

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

CELEBRATING HOLY WEEK AT HOME

This year's commemoration of Holy Week will be unlike any in living memory. Without the familiar rituals that worship at church provides, how can we enter into these days from our own homes? A few suggestions are below.

Create a Home Prayer Space: If you haven't done so already, designate a space in your living room or family room as a spiritual focus. Put a crucifix or statue of Jesus and Mary at the center, with candles on either side that could be lit – if safe – at times of prayer. Until the Easter vigil, the images could be veiled, just as are ours in church. You might also place there a Bible open to an account of Jesus' suffering and death. For Easter, be sure to decorate with flowers too!

Connect with Us Online: We have been providing daily updates to the Prayer Resources Page on our website (just go to <https://www.sfxparish.com/> and click on the banner announcement). Besides daily Mass, you will also find a video Stations of the Cross from our church and other things to assist your prayer.

Join Us – Virtually – for the Triduum Services: We will be livestreaming the services for the Paschal Triduum – that is, Holy Thursday through Holy Saturday. An Easter Sunday Mass will go live at 8:30 a.m. on Easter morning and will be available for viewing the rest of the day; the other services will also be available for later viewing.

HOLY THURSDAY

Mass of the Lord's Supper at 7 p.m.

GOOD FRIDAY

Commemoration of the Lord's Passion at 3 p.m.

HOLY SATURDAY

Solemn Paschal Vigil at 7:30 p.m.

All of these will be viewable on our parish Facebook page – either search for “St. Francis Xavier Parish Acushnet” on Facebook, or use the link on our Prayer Resources page.

Keep the Paschal Fast: Good Friday and until evening on Holy Saturday are times which commemorate the Lord's death on the cross and rest in the tomb. Good Friday is a day of fast and abstinence, and this practice is encouraged for Holy Saturday as well. While only those over 14 need to abstain from meat, and those between 18 and 59 are bound to fast, these would be good occasions for a simple vegetarian or fish meal for the whole family. During the meal, a family member might read from the accounts of Jesus' death in the Gospels, keeping the focus on where it should be.

PARISH INFORMATION

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Mon-Fri: 9:30am – 4:00pm

Please make an appointment to meet with

HELPFUL CONTACTS

Religious Education: 508-998-7445

School: 508-995-4313

School Fax: 508-995-0456

ACCESSIBILITY

- Open for Prayer Every Day
- Wheelchair Lift
- Cry-room

St. Francis Xavier Parish

125 Main Street

Acushnet, MA 02743

tel: (508)-995-7600 fax: (508) -995-1794

email: info@sfxparish.com

Fr. Riley J. Williams, Pastor

[rjw@sfxparish.com]

Deacon David Pepin

[dbp@sfxparish.com]

Mrs. Janine Hammarquist, Rel. Ed. Coordinator

[jlh@sfxparish.com]

[ministry@sfxacushnet.com]

Mr. Steven Guillotte, Director of Pastoral Services

[sng@sfxparish.com]

Mrs. Michelle Russo, Parish School Principal

[mrusso@sfxacushnet.com]

Mrs. Anabela Shaughnessy, Asst. Principal

[ashaughnessy@sfxacushnet.com]

HOLY MASS

Sunday 8:00am & 10:30am

Saturday Vigil 4:00pm

Monday-Saturday 9:00am

First Friday 9:00am & 6:00pm

Latin/Extraordinary Form: As Announced

CONFESSIONS

Monday 5:30-6:30pm

Saturday 9:30-10:00am

Saturday 3:00-3:45pm

First Fridays 6:45-7:15pm

Any Time by Appointment

ADORATION

Mon - Friday 6:30am-9:00pm

Saturday 6:30am-2:45pm

VESPERS

Monday: Vespers with Benediction

Tuesday: Vespers

Wednesday: Vespers with Benediction

(Vespers begins at 6:30 pm)

ON THE COVER

The Lord GOD is my help, therefore I am not disgraced; I have set my face like flint, knowing that I shall not be put to shame. (Is 50:7)

“Death, comes for us all, even for kings he comes”. These are the words of St. Thomas More in Robert Bolt’s screenplay, *A Man for All Seasons*. More speaks these words as he is tried for high treason in July of 1535 for refusing to take the Oath of Supremacy which for one thing bound its takers to recognize the king as overseer of the church in England.

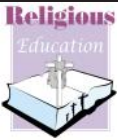
Thomas More was once Lord Chancellor of England, highest law official in the realm, until he fell into social disgrace for refusing to agree to Henry VIII’s divorce and remarriage. However, St. Thomas did not behave in a disgraced manner before his accusers and condemners. Instead, in the words of Bolt, he “clamored liked a champion” for Christ; for the Lord was his help and his shield. When St. Thomas More arrived at the chopping block, he forgave his executioner “right readily” and before his soul was detached from its head, More stated, “*I am His Majesty’s good servant, but God’s first*”. Thomas More was brought low, losing his title and office and his life, brought seemingly to a place of shame; yet he could not truly be put to shame for his imitation of Christ.

Christ predicted that his followers would stand before worldly authorities and face unjust condemnations (Lk 21:12). Jesus stood up first and faced this evil fate. He came to His Passion through His Father’s constant protection. Our Lord Jesus might have been killed well before His trial. He could have been taken by the mob (Lk 4:29) or by the religious authorities (Mt 12:14). Yet it was His destiny as judge of the world to be judged by the world for the sake of those who would believe in Him (Jn 3:16). Jesus did this to overcome the world (Jn 16:33) and Satan who had once mastered it (Jn 14:29). Jesus also did what He did to set us an example so that we too might, in flesh and in spirit, overcome the evil authorities of the world.

For this **Passion** and **Palm Sunday**, we place on our bulletin cover a work by the Milanese Renaissance painter **Andrea Solario** entitled *Ecce Homo*. Milan was uplifted in art in the 15th century through the long stays there of Leonardo da Vinci. Solario became one of his most avid followers.

“*Ecce homo*” are the Latin words “*Behold the man!*” spoken by Pontius Pilate to the crowd after he had Jesus scourged and the Roman soldiers handed Our Lord a reed scepter and placed a crown of thorns upon His head (Jn 19:5). Close examination of Solario’s painting reveals the thorns penetrating Our Lord’s forehead, blood dripping down just before they mingle with tears. Solario lifts the hands of Jesus into this Passion portrait so we can see the bindings about his wrist. Jesus barely touches the reed, refusing this sign of a weak kingdom easily snapped. Most striking in this visage are the dejection and the shame stressed by the tilted Sacred Head. Yet, Christ is not put to shame. His human nature has not an iota of shame for never having done anything shameful. It is our shame he bears. He brings our shame to the Holy Cross. *By Thy Holy Cross, O Lord, Thou hast redeemed the world.*

Palm Sunday - April 5, 2020



All rescheduled dates are dependent upon the recommendations of our Bishop.

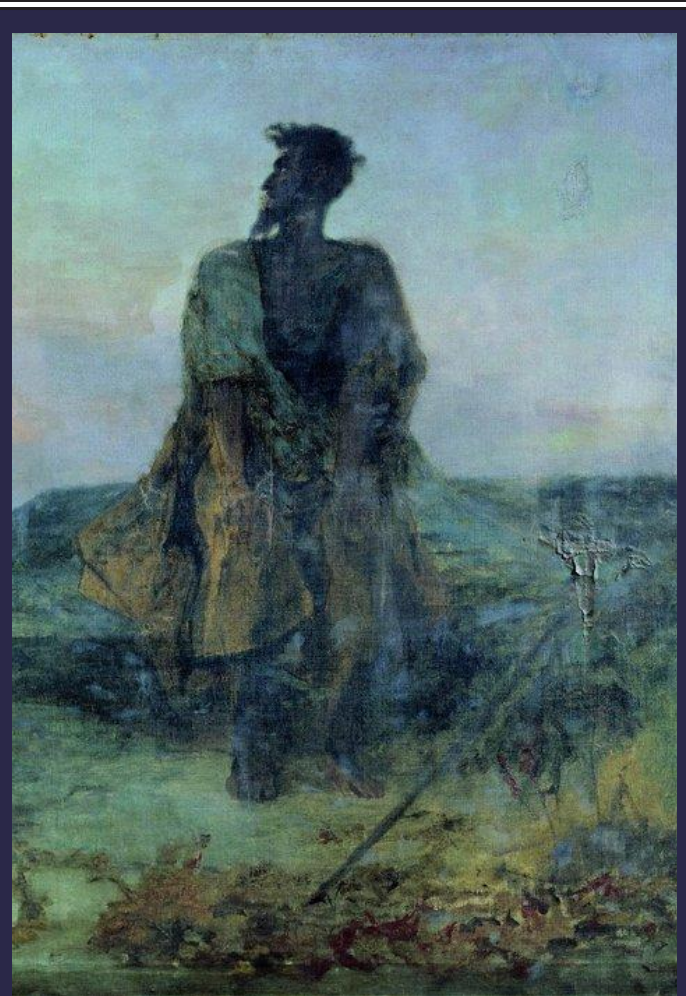
Please visit our parish website or the parish Facebook page to view the Mass. Please make time for prayer (Daily readings via the Magnificat or USCCB website, Rosary, Stations of the Cross, Divine Mercy Chaplet, even your own prayers during this most difficult time).

All First Communion Students have been receiving class work via their parents email in google forms, please continue checking your emails for the upcoming class. First Communion Day of Reflection has been cancelled and all work will be sent home mostly via email, if you or someone you know does not have access to a computer please contact me and we can make special arrangements. Please keep all of the First Communicants in your prayers as they prepare to receive Holy Communion for the first time this year.

Level 1-9 classes Please make sure that you are checking your emails. Religious Education Class work, helpful prayer tips & websites as well as fun activities for feast days have been sent out via parents email. Some of this work is being required to be sent back completed, especially if your child is in a sacramental year.

To keep informed of continuous updates please visit our Parish Master Calendar on our website at www.sfxparish.com.

Thank you to all of the families that have taken the time to check emails and complete the work on the Holy Mass!
God Bless, Mrs. Hammarquist



Judas (detail)
Fyodor Bronnikov(1874)

Then Judas, his betrayer... deeply regretted what he had done. He returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, "I have sinned in betraying innocent blood." (Mt 27:3-4)

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
PRESCHOOL - GRADE 8



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
ACUSHNET, MASSACHUSETTS

With another week of virtual learning behind us, we celebrate our success and address our struggles as we continue to move forward on this digital teaching journey. COVID-19 has certainly affected all of us, and our students and staff are missing each other greatly! Our teachers have literally been stretched to the limit and have risen to the occasion of providing quality at-home internet learning for their students. Thank you for your continued prayers for our teachers, students, and their families throughout these difficult days. Stay safe and be well!

God Bless, Michelle Russo/Principal



SFX Pre-K 4 teacher, Michelle Cordeiro wears a birthday crown for her student, Ivy De Roches during her virtual class!

WATCH HOLY MASS
AT ST. FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH

Visit sfxparish.com



SFX
WOMEN
OF GRACE

What a difference a week makes. A similar thing happened over two thousand years ago. In one week, the crowd in Jerusalem went from greeting Jesus with shouts of “Hosanna” to crying out, “Crucify Him.” The authorities bore down on Jesus and challenged Him over His Messianic claims. Although Jesus spoke, they didn’t listen. Knowing this, Jesus said before the Sanhedrin when asked if he was the Christ, “If I tell you, you will not believe; and if I ask you, you will not answer.” (Lk 22:67-68)

Holy week is especially hard for us this year. We do not have the opportunity to meet together holding our blessed palms and praising God with “Hosannas”. We do have one thing that cannot be taken away from us, and that is the Word present in our hearts and homes. Take this week to hear Jesus’ teaching and know that even though life gets hard we have one constant: the gift of our Holy Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

Carol Eccleston

READINGS FOR HOLY WEEK
APRIL 5, 2020

Sunday: Mt 21:1-11/Is 50:4-7/Ps 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24 [2a]/Phil 2:6-11/Mt 26:14—27:66 or 27:11-54

Monday: Is 42:1-7/Ps 27:1, 2, 3, 13-14 [1a]/Jn 12:1-11

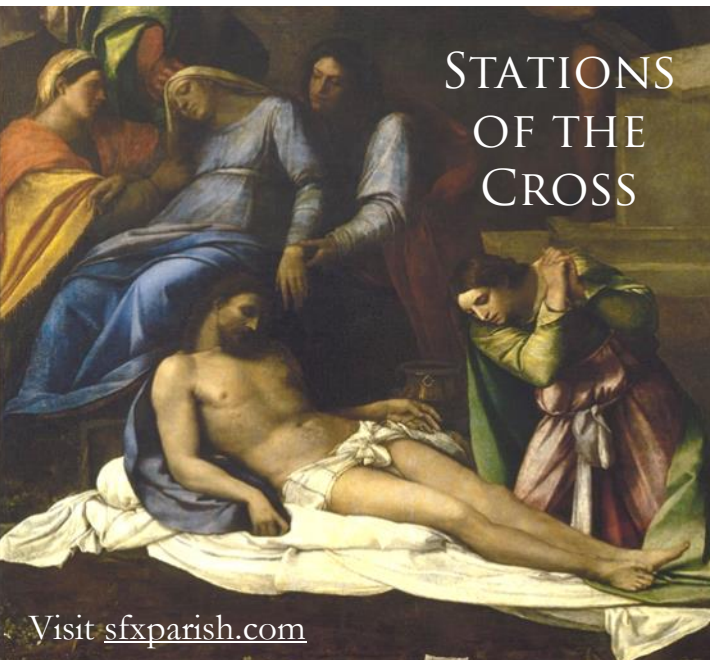
Tuesday: Is 49:1-6/Ps 71:1-2, 3-4a, 5ab-6ab, 15 and 17 [cf. 15ab]/Jn 13:21-33, 36-38

Wednesday: Is 50:4-9a/Ps 69:8-10, 21-22, 31 and 33-34 [14c]/Mt 26:14-25

Thursday: *Chrism Mass*: Is 61:1-3a, 6a, 8b-9/Ps 89:21-22, 25 and 27 [2]/Rv 1:5-8/Lk 4:16-21

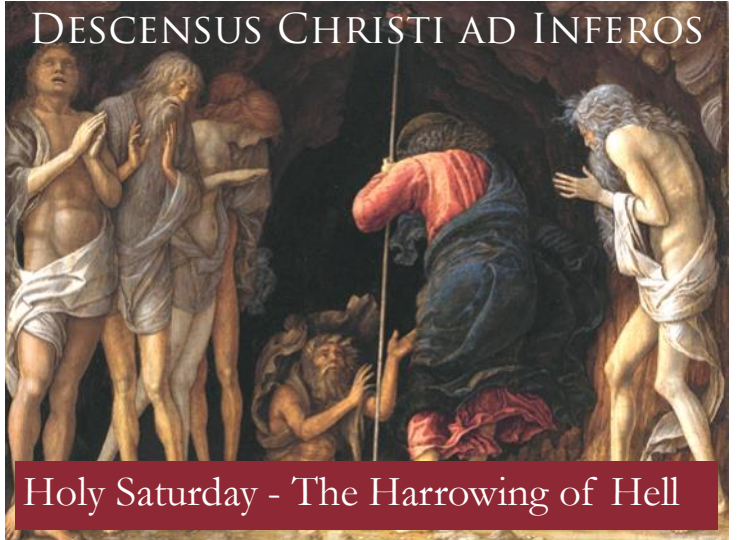
Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper: Ex 12:1-8, 11-14/Ps 116:12-13, 15-16bc, 17-18 [cf. 1 Cor 10:16]/1 Cor 11:23-26/Jn 13:1-15

Friday: Is 52:13—53:12/Ps 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-16, 17, 25 [Lk 23:46]/Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-9/Jn 18:1—19:42



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HOLY WEEK IS: “The week preceding Easter, from Passion (Palm) Sunday through Holy Saturday inclusive. During this week the Church commemorates the Passion of Christ, and all the ceremonies reflect this attitude of sorrow, yet joined with gratitude for God’s mercy in [Jesus] becoming man in order to suffer and die for a sinful mankind. (from The Catholic Dictionary at Catholic Culture.org.)



Holy Saturday - The Harrowing of Hell

PALM SUNDAY & PARISH ENVELOPES: Father Williams will be blessing palms on Saturday 4 April. Palms will then be available for pick-up at the church on Saturday from Noon to 4:00 pm. You may also pick up your palms on Sunday 5 April from 8:00 am to Noon. Weather permitting, palms can be picked up in the large parking lot (elevator side of the church). When you arrive to pick up your palms please refrain from congregating with others and please keep up with the established requirements for “social distancing”.

During these times when we are available for you to pick up palms we expect to have men of our parish present to collect any parish envelopes that you would like to drop off. Please bring any prepared offering envelopes with you at that time.

While we are a solid parish because of your generous support, our parish income has of course suffered for having no public Mass schedule due to the necessary public health orders against social gatherings during the novel Corona Virus epidemic. As you can well appreciate parish bills continue to need to be paid during this period of caution and containment, so we appreciate your on-going support. We ask that you please prepare your envelopes at home each Sunday as if you are attending Mass so you will be able to turn in all your offering envelopes when public Mass returns.

This being said, we do understand that some parishioners may also be suffering from work closings and reduced incomes which may affect their household finances. Thus, we ask that you do only what you are able to do considering your particular circumstances.

Thank you and God Bless.

STEVE'S COLUMN

A BARE ESSENTIAL: It is now about two weeks since our Commonwealth has been operating solely on “essential services”. This unprecedented and resolute reduction in economic and personal activity for the purpose of “social distancing” was of course implemented to stop the spread of a novel strain of Corona virus.

To effect this change, a nine page COVID-19 list of essential services was promulgated by Governor Baker. Each service on the list is considered to be indispensable to the lives and functions of citizens during this pandemic. It is a comprehensive list which provides all observers of the human condition with an interesting perspective not only on the government’s priorities but on its notion of man.

Interestingly, our governor does indicate (on his order dated March 23rd) that “workers at places of worship” do provide an essential service. They can be found under the rather dull and disorderly title of “Other Community-Based Essential Functions and Government Operations”. Other essential roles deemed similar enough to be in this category with church workers are: election personnel, weather forecasters, hotel workers and laundry services. This would actually be humorous except that “workers at places of worship” is the last item noted in this jostling jumble of jobs. It is at the very bottom of the list.

Now something is seriously amiss in the deliberations of any government-of-the-people when it is unable to think of even one essential service to place under a heading titled “Religion”, especially when, as is the case with our state leadership, it is quite able to come up with three services under the heading “Hazardous Materials”. Yet truly, what should we expect from a state government that excludes the Church from the role of adoption provider for deeming male and female parents as “essential” to the raising of children.

Now state and church both exist for man. The former is natural to man; the latter supernatural. Yet both are providential in the will of God. Each has its source in God. As such, both are meant to agree on the essentials for man. In times when reason and faith are both held high and in accord with each other, state and church will agree on what is essential to man. Sadly, this is not the case in our times.

In fact, any statist government that sees religion as a solely private affair meriting no say in civil matters has already failed to grasp the essential nature of man. Mundane man (male and female), man who has one ear planted on the earth and the other ear blocked to heaven, is not complete man and therefore will know and understand only *some* of his own needs. He will follow mostly his inferior needs thinking these to be essential.

This is the situation we find ourselves in now, since for example while religion has become barely essential to the public welfare, abortion has become one of its bare essentials. Andrew Beckworth, President of *Massachusetts Family Institute*, recently informed its supporters in an email of how the Department of Public Health in Massachusetts exempted abortion from its list of non-essential *elective* surgeries during this pandemic, therefore (essentially) declaring abortion to be an essential service. Considering former moral decisions and acts of our governorship and the department of public health, Massachusetts citizens should not find this surprising. However, if we are to be thoughtful citizens and grasp what is going on we must put on our thinking caps and consider the very meaning of the term “essential”.

“Essential” comes from the Latin *essentia*, meaning “in the highest degree”. *Essentia* (English “essence”) has deeper roots in the Latin term *esse* meaning “to be”. Thus, when we speak of essentials we are speaking of those things that we need because they fulfill our human nature, that is, those things or activities or powers that make us what we are.

This is why it is all the more disturbing that states such as Colorado, Massachusetts and Washington, which have stopped all elective surgeries to conserve their in-state medical protective equipment, have at the same time exempted abortion from their stop order. Yet our purpose here is not to examine the political debate over these decisions but rather to examine the philosophical undertones and fallout over, for instance, the National Abortion Rights Action League’s (NARAL) colluding position that surgical abortions, including all elective surgical abortions, ought to always be considered “essential”.

NARAL, Planned Parenthood and various other feminist organizations have consistently taken the public position that abortion is an essential service to women’s health. However, they cannot call abortion “essential” without exposing their foul presumption that abortion goes to the very essence of womanhood! When we say that food, shelter, clothing, freedom of movement, social association, and religious worship are all essential to man, we are saying that that these things are necessary for man to be man. By comparison when the feminist and her feminist allies say that abortion is essential to women, they are saying that abortion is necessary for women to be women! They are saying that women need abortion “to be” what they are, i.e. to fulfil their gender.

Back in October 2015, in a piece for *The Nation*, feminist writer Katha Pollitt penned an essay entitled “Gender Equality Is Not Possible without Abortion”. Now we have neither the space nor the time to debate that obfuscating term “gender equality”. Suffice it to say that to make the claim that abortion is essential for female equality is to make the claim that abortion is essential for the female to be who she is meant to be; to achieve her essence.

Some feminists might shiver at the claim that women cannot be women without the right to destroy the child in the womb (however most are stone cold believers of this)! This is the principle they stand for and act upon: abortion as equalizer, as fundamental right, as essential need; abortion atrociously authenticating the very essence of womanhood.